

Administrative staff is an important part of your business, and it's vital to hire great people to fill this key role.

Having a productive, enthusiastic administrative staff can make a huge difference in the way your business feels and runs. Since this part of the staff is highly visible, interacting with employees and visitors alike, having amiable and productive people is a vital part of success.

Expand your search.

When searching for candidates, consider going outside the normal boundaries of job postings. Try utilizing recruiters who specialize in administrative staffing. Also, try asking your current staff or colleagues if they have any connections. When you attend networking meetings, professional associations, work events, or even social events, gently put out the word that you're looking for great administrative staff. Word of mouth and direct recommendations usually end up making both happy employees and employers.

Concentrate on the skills that are most vital to success.

Depending on what position you are hiring for, there may be some skills that are more valuable than others and therefore should take center stage. For example, if the job opening requires someone to direct calls, the ability to handle multiple phone lines, deal with pressure, multitask and be personable are most important. However, if the position primarily calls for sorting or filing and will not interact with clients, organization skills and strict attention to detail could be more important.

Make the interview count.

When you interview candidates, make sure to ask direct, pertinent questions about their skill set and experience. Begin with casual conversation to get a feel for a candidate's demeanor and social skills, and gradually transition to questions that give more detail about their experience, skill set, interests and career goals. Listen closely to how they answer and think carefully about whether they are a good fit for the position and the company.

Be open about the position.

Be very clear about the position expectations and details—if the applicant does not understand your expectations completely, it could lead to discord. Asking great questions and being direct about the position will ensure that everyone is on the same page, which means fewer misunderstandings and issues down the road.

It's never wrong to test skills.

If certain software skills are key to success in the position, test applicants to make sure they can do what they say they can. Sometimes it's easy to stretch the truth on a resume, and test scores with office suite programs could level the playing field and show who really knows their stuff.

Administrative staff is an important part of your business, and it's vital to hire great people to fill this key role. A great administrator can make your office and business run smoothly and keep both employees and clients happy.

